

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY OSLO

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INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L OSLO 0779

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SV, NO

SUBJ: SPY CASE: SOVIETS EXPELL TWO NORWEGIANS

REFS: (A) OSLO 0701 (NOTAL) (B) OSLO 0640 (C) OSLO 0605 (D) OSLO 480
(E) OSLO 0521 (F) MOSCOW 2119

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

SUMMARY: SOVIET OFFICIALS HAVE INFORMED NORWEGIANS THAT
TWO NORWEGIAN EMBASSY OFFICIALS ARE PERSONA NON
GRATA IN USSR BECAUSE THEIR ACTIVITIES ARE
INCOMPATIBLE WITH DIPLOMATIC STATUS. ONE OF EMBASSY
OFFICIALS HAS ALREADY LEFT USSR. EXPLUSION IS CLEARLY
RELATED TO NORWAY'S EXPULSION OF SOVIETS ON SPY
CHARGES. NORWEGIANS CONTINUE DOWNPLAY AFFAIRS' EFFECT
ON BILATERAL RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. SOVIET MFA SCANDINAVIAN OFFICER DIRECTOR SOBOLEV INFORMED
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NORWAY'S MOSCOW AMBASSADOR GRAVER FEB 14 THAT TWO NORWEGIAN
DIPLOMATS WERE UNDERSIRABLE IN USSR BECAUSE THEIR ACTIVITIES
THERE WERE "INCOMPATIBLE WITH THEIR DIPLOMATIC STATUS." SOBOLEV
CALLED IN GRAVER TO INFORM HIM THAT THE EMBASSY'S COMMERCIAL
ATTACHE KNUT MUGAAS, 29, AND FIRST SECRETARY KAARE HAUGE, 37,
WOULD NO LONGER BE ALLOWED IN USSR. END UNCLASSIFIED.

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2. ACCORDING TO MFA OFFICIALS IN OSLO, SOBOLEV DID NOT SPECIFICALLY TIE THE CHARGES TO THE RECENT SPY CASE IN NORWAY, BUT THERE IS NOT ANY DOUBT IN GON THAT REASON WERE RECENT NORWEGIAN EXPLUSION OF SOVIET DIPLOMATS, WHO LEFT OSLO LAST WEEK. GRAVER REJECTED SOBOLEV'S CHARGES AGAINST THE TWO NORWEGIANS AND MFA CARRIED STATEMENT THROUGH SPOESMAN EGIL HELLE SAME DAY CALLING SOVIET ACTION "GROUNDLESS."

3. ONLY MUGAAS WAS IN MOSCOW AT THE TIME. HAUGE LEFT USSR LAST AUGUST ON TRANSFER TO TOKYO. BOTH WERE CONSIDERED TO BE SOVIET SPECIALISTS, WITH GOOD COMPETENCE IN RUSSIAN LANGUAGE. ACTION PREVENTS EITHER FROM SERVING AGAIN IN USSR AND MOST LIKELY IN EASTERN EUROPE. END CONFIDENTIAL.

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4. PUBLIC AND PRESS REACTION TO SOVIET ACTION CREATED RENEWED STIR IN PRESS ABOUT SPY CASE AND SOVIET RELATIONS. SEVERAL SENSATIONALIST PAPERS ARE SPECULATING THAT ESPIONAGE AFFAIR WILL HAVE CONTINUED SERIOUS EFFECT ON NORWEGIAN-SOVIET RELATIONS. OSLO DAILY "DAGBLADET" SAID CHILLING BILATERAL RELATIONS WILL RESULT IN HOLDUP OF NEGOTIATIONS TO WORK OUT FISHERY ARRANGEMENTS IN THE DISPUTED GRAY ZONE AREA IN BARENTS SEA AND IN DELAY OF SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTER GROMYKO'S VISIT TO OSLO THIS YEAR. CONSERVATIVE OSLO DAILY "AFTENPOSTEN" CALLED THE SOVIET ACTION REGRETABLE, ESPECIALLY SINCE IT CUT NORWEGIAN
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EMBASSY RUSSIAN AND TRADE EXPERTISE. IT NOTED THAT NOT SINCE 1941 WHEN HITLER PRESSED THE SOVIET UNION TO BREAK RLATIONS WITH NORWAY HAS A NORWEGIAN DIPLOMAT BEEN SENT OUT FO USSR. END UNCLASSIFIED.

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6. NORWEGIAN OFFICIALS ARE TRYING TO DOWN-PLAY EFFECT OF EXPLUSION ON BILATERAL RELATIONS IN HOPES THAT IMPORTANT SOVIET-NORWEGIAN MATTERS CAN PROCEED. STORTING'S FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN TOR OFTEDAL (LABOR) STATED HE REGRETTED SOVIET ACTIONS, ESPOUSING HOPE THAT RUSSIANS WOULD HAVE STOPPED WITH FORMAL COMPLAINT REGISTERED FEB 6 (REF B) AND THAT ACTION WOULD NOT DISTURB BILATERAL CONTACTS. CONSERVATIVE COMMITTEE SPOKESMAN PAUL THYNESS CALLED SOVIET ACTION "EXPECTED" AND VENTURED VIEW IT WOULD NOT AFFECT BILATERAL TIES.

7. MFA OFFICIALS, WHO LIKEWISE HOPED THE FEB 6 SOVIET PROTEST WAS END OF MATTER, EXPRESSED DISAPPOINTMENT TO US THAT SOVIETS HAD TAKEN THE ADDITIONAL STEP. THEY SAY THEY HAVE NO INDICATION AT THIS STAGE THAT SOVIETS WILL FOLLOW UP THE EXPULSION WITH ADDITIONAL ACTIONS. GON POSITION IS TO LOW-KEY THE SPY CASE WHILE SEEKING TO CONDUCT BILATERAL BUSINESS WITH USSR AS USUAL WITH HOPE THAT MUTUAL INTERESTS IN RESOLVING BILATERAL ISSUES WILL ENABLE BOTH GOVERNMENTS TO WORK TOGETHER. END CONFIDENTIAL.
ANDERS

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